



Entain
NEW ZEALAND



PUNTER
OF THE **YEAR**
2023

Leighton Howl Wins 36th 2023 ENTAIN New Zealand Punter of the Year, collects \$76,850

Auckland businessman, racehorse owner and successful hobby syndicator Leighton Howl claimed the 2023 Entain New Zealand Punter of the Year competition at Hawke's Bay Racing's Livamol Classic raceday at Hastings last month.

Leighton Howl, who entered as an individual, capped off a mixed day by winning the Punter of the Year contest at Hawke's Bay's big day with a final pool of \$21,850.

"I have a 40% share in Mach Schnell that raced in the 1400m Group 3 Sprint where he ran an ok 10th." Howl said.

"Shaun Clothworthy and I agreed he was just not fit enough and hadn't done too well since returning from Joe Pride's stable in Sydney only six weeks earlier."

"So, I was dragging my lip around after Race 7. It was at that point I thought to myself I need to get my ass upstairs and win this betting competition".

Howl won the contest after starting with the required opening balance of \$1,500 and then having to invest a minimum of \$150 per race across the 10 race Livamol Classic day. By winning he then took home the \$20,000 cash prize on top of his initial \$21,850 pool collect.

"The day started well with winner Cannon Hill in the first but in general from that point on I paddled my way through the day, with the plan of simply having enough balance on my voucher going into the last two races."



LEIGHTON HOWL

"I got there with \$1000 to play with on the last two races, where my two best bets of the day were 'Express Yourself' Race 9 paying \$6.40 win (having won a 1200m race at Awapuni in April in 1.08.00, so clearly not a slow horse) and 'Churchillian' Race 10 at \$12.60 win - a horse racing against many wet trackers and who just needed a clear run from out wide, and on the pace)."

A \$250 bet on Express Yourself netted \$1750 and all that went on Churchillian to win in the last.

"Many of the leading punters going into races 9 and 10 were sitting ducks and not really looking to move the dial," Howl said.

"So, it was set up for someone to plant it on the last two races - which was not difficult. I was confident the Churchill mare was going to get me home after losing a lovely yearling by the sire earlier in the year, due to a freak stable accident - maybe it was karma and supposed to be."



Howl, a Recruitment Director in Auckland, who grew up in the racing town of Matamata, had not entered the Hastings contest before, but was convinced to enter by friend David Redmond who works in the Elite Team at the TAB.

“Following the winning presentation in the pavilion, the TAB offered me a free \$10,000 bonus bet on the Everest (which was about to run),” Howl said.

“That went on Think About It, Joe Pride’s horse, since I had a strong connection to the stable. Joe was always confident the horse would get there – which it did, so I didn’t “think about it” too much” and that netted another \$35,000 which got the party started.

“It was great to see people in the room also getting on the horse seconds before the race” says Howl.

Outside running a recruitment consultancy in Auckland, Howl buys and syndicates a few horses.

“I often have three or four on the go at one time, but when you are not buying big numbers, you

can be more selective, and your research goes a lot further on the racetrack. Over the years they have gone down quite well. Following selecting the horses at Karaka, we put together small syndicates of no more than 10 owners to race them, mainly friends and business associates, with a focus on networking, socialising, and most of all winning” Howl said.

We have Mach Schnell running around back in NZ as well as a promising Satono Aladdin 3-year-old Lupo Solitario, so it’s nice having a couple of good horses racing this summer on the big days. Other horses we have interests in now include Ceolwulf (NZ) (Tavistock) with Joe Pride, a colt we selected out of the 2022 Ready to Run sale. He went on to run 2nd in the Ming Dynasty behind Encap in his third start and is now out for a spell, set for a summer/autumn campaign.”

Other horses purchased at Karaka or bought an interest in include Gaultier (a Group 1 winner), Tomorrowland, Arraignment, Miss Keepsake (Group 1 winner), Galaxy Miss, and Villifye (a Group 2 winner) to name a few.

